

Save Foggy Bottom...It's Where We Live!

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Editorial

A Say in Our Squares

With its announced intention to in effect scrap its current Campus Plan and start a "new," 20-year plan cycle, GWU is effectively throwing out the baby with the bath water. Don't like the plan? Start a new and improved one!

What's troubling – besides the fact, as attorney Michael Hannon points out, that the plan is effectively a planned unit development for the entire Foggy Bottom campus – is that the city's Office of Planning is apparently giving the university a pass on its current Campus Plan.

The FBA has said all along that we want the Campus Plan enforced. As McGruff the Crime Dog would say, it's the law. A big part of that is having caps on student enrollment, which is supposed to be capped at 20,000, though the actual number is in dispute.

GWU now says it will conduct an audit – our position is that any such audit must be done and verified by an independent agency.

It's also problematic that some of these new plans for a chessboard of rezoning appear to have been cut "behind closed doors," without adequate public input and scrutiny. Square 54 is and will surely continue to be a lightning rod for community concern about GWU's plans, given its visible location on Washington Circle.

Up in the West End, meanwhile, sits another "square of contention," Square 37, home to the West End library, the Special Operations police station, the Tiverton apartments (some of the last modestly priced units in our area) and two historic townhouses.

As reported in last week's FBN, the city's library board is considering "redeveloping" around many D.C. libraries.

The *Washington Post* reported in a front-page Feb. 7 story that this will include many libraries and other public facilities around the city, and quoted one developer who said builders were "salivating" over the prospect of more development on Square 37.

Whoa, whoa, whoa – in both Foggy Bottom and the West End, the residents are the ones who live here. Some of the city's recent development has been good for D.C., and the FBA has supported some large-scale development in our area, including the three huge projects at the old Columbia Hospital for Women site.

But there's no denying that some of the development has

been bad, or even ugly, for city residents. Any reading of the local papers, from the *Post* to the *City Paper* to the *Current*, shows that there has also been

massive disruption to long-time residents in their own city by much of the city's development and gentrification over the past few years.

Civic engagement is an opportunity that many around town take advantage of, but it doesn't seem right that citizens should constantly have fight never-ending battles because developers are pulling strings and cutting deals behind closed doors.

What's really going on here? It's no secret that Mayor Williams' administration has been at the forefront of extensive development all over the city since he has been in office. With the clock ticking on his tenure, is the city trying to ram through as much development as possible before he leaves office after this year?

All the community wants, for Square 54, Square 37, or any of the other areas of our neighborhood, is an adequate say in its own fate.

*Our community
simply wants a say
in its own fate.*

GWU Wants New Campus Plan

George Washington University last week said will file revised, 20-year Campus Plan and for planned unit developments throughout much of its Foggy Bottom campus.

PUDs, as they are also known, in effect are zoning waivers that allow for higher levels of development, including such things as floor-area ratios, which measure density.

The university's plans were outlined at a Feb. 4 public meeting hosted by D.C. Office of Planning Officials at the West End Library. GWU said in its Feb. 6 notice that it would file a separate zoning application

for Square 54, the now-vacant site of its former hospital at 23rd St. and Washington Circle.

While some attendees of the Feb. 4 meeting said there was extensive discussion of the impending plan, several FBA members said they took issue with OP Director Ellen McCarthy's assertion that the association had not taken part in discussions with the university on the plans for Square 54.

FBA President Joy Howell – who as reported in last week's FBN said the Feb. 4 meeting was held with too little public notice and who was out of town and unable to attend – said last week she was "surprised to hear the FBA refused to negotiate [with GWU]. We certainly were prepared to negotiate and entered into the process with good faith. When we arrived, the university refused to participate."

Howell was referring to last March's planned negotiations with GWU. The FBA did not take part in separate public hearings held last year that were sponsored by the university that the association believed did not give adequate representation to community views, as the process was sponsored and paid for by GWU.

Affording a 'Do Over'

One of the community's major concerns is over GWU's plan to forge ahead with a new Campus Plan when there are still three years remaining on its existing plan. That plan includes such things as student headcounts, which have been a contested issue between the school and neighborhood groups.

"They seek to have virtually the entire campus approved as a

PUD, and they seek rezoning of several blocks" in the campus, according to Michael Hannon, the attorney representing Donald Kreuzer in a challenge to GWU's buildings on 23rd St.

In a Feb. 7 letter to the planning office, Hannon wrote that "OP believes that GW should present an entirely new Campus Plan, rather than seek to obtain revisions of the existing Campus Plan."

"This is puzzling since the existing Campus Plan ... was the product of a great deal of work by the community and the city. It was successfully defended through both the local and federal courts. It is the law. OP cannot bargain away the existing [plan and] is affording GW a 'do over,'" Hannon wrote.

Counting Heads

As for the student head count issue, the university has agreed to an audit of enrollment, to be conducted by an accounting firm not doing business with it, according to Michael Thomas, incoming ANC Commissioner for the West End, who attended the Feb. 4 meeting. The audit is expected to be done within two months, Thomas said.

"But what is not clear, even after pointed questions, is who decides what information, and just as importantly what instructions and definitions of qualifying students, are given to the auditors," Thomas wrote in an e-mail summary of the meeting last week.

"Counting bodies is important, but not decisive if GWU gets its way as outlined on its charts. OP has not given its opinion of what they think of GWU's creative math, and it may be left to the new Zoning Administrator, Bill Crews, to sort that out," he wrote.

In Brief

ANC Meeting Tonight

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A will meet tonight, Feb. 15, at its usual time and place: 7 p.m. at the State Plaza Hotel, 2116 F Street. All are welcome.

Included on the agenda are modifications for parking spaces at the new Trader Joe's on 25th St. north of Pennsylvania Ave., set to open this summer, and the vacancy in the West End's single-member district 2A02.

For more ANC information, call 202-736-1775, or e-mail: anc2a@earthlink.net.

Thomas Takes West End ANC Seat

Michael Thomas was the only candidate for the West End seat to file petition papers by the Feb. 6 deadline, according to ANC Commissioner Dorothy Miller. Thomas will hold the 2A02 seat until the next general election in November, at which time it may be contested.

"We are delighted the West End has a new commissioner who is so well-qualified," said FBA Board member Jackie Lemire, who lives in the West End.

On the Web

Don't forget to check back issues of the FBN and other FBA matters of community interest at the association's Web site, www.savefoggybottom.com.

Also, many in the Foggy Bottom and West End community use a Web bulletin board and discussion group called the "Foggy Bottom Alert," at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FoggyBottomAlert>. (Not affiliated with the FBA.) A Yahoo registration is required, which is free.

THE FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

c/o West End Library

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The Foggy Bottom News is published by the Foggy Bottom Association as a service to its members and provides information on FBA and neighborhood news, programs, activities and other events of interest to FBA members. Contributions and story ideas are welcome, but the FBN reserves the right to edit or hold pieces as space requires.

The Foggy Bottom Association was formed by a group of citizens in 1955 and was formally incorporated in 1959. Attendance at FBA meetings is open to all residents of Foggy Bottom and the West End.

FBA Officers:

PRESIDENT – Joy Howell • VICE PRESIDENT – Barbara Spillinger
SECRETARY – Jill Nevius • TREASURER – Russell Conlan
MEMBERSHIP – Edward B. Gable Jr.

FBA Board of Directors:

Ellie Becker, Joseph G. Chaplick, Elizabeth B. Elliott,
Jacqueline G. Lemire, Michael G. Malloy, James R. O'Leary,
Ronald Cocome (Immediate Past President; *Ex Officio*)

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→ → → **FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS** (continued from preceding page) February 15, 2006

Use that FBA Membership Card!

Foggy Bottom Association members receive a variety of discounts from local area merchants simply by showing our membership card! Here's a list – and stay tuned for our "Preferred Merchants Program," coming in 2006! The membership card also allows FBA members use of GWU's Gelman Library.

FBA MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Blackie's Restaurant

1217 22nd St., NW

Tel: 333-1100 • Fax: 331-7850

50% discount on any wines offered by the glass;
valid only with dinner

Chateau Florist

2000 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Tel: 293-9005

10% off any arrangement of at least \$25

Danny Diaz, Ltd. (Men's Clothing)

522 23rd St., NW

Tel: 296-2767

20% off merchandise; 10% off men's and women's alterations

Elenco Salon

504 23rd St., NW

Tel: 293-3006

\$5 discount on any hair service

Expressions (Fine Clothing)

2000 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Tel: 775-9299

15% discount

Grillfish Restaurant

1200 New Hampshire Ave., NW

Tel: 331-7310 • Fax: 331-3751

10% off food purchases
(does not apply to alcohol)

Marshall's Bar & Grille

2524 L St., NW

Tel: 333-1155 • Fax: 333-4664

10% off; does not apply to any other discounts

Metropolitan Optical

2000 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Tel: 659-6555 • Fax: 659-2134

15% off any eyewear purchase; not applicable with
other offers or on contact lenses

New Hampshire Valet

600 New Hampshire Ave., NW

Tel: 342-5700

10% off dry cleaning, laundry, shoe repair

One Fish Two Fish

2423 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Tel: 882-0977

10% off total meal bill for dine-in and carry-out only;
not available on delivery orders

Primi Piatti

2013 Eye St., NW

Tel: 223-3600 • Fax: 296-3725

10% off check

ProEuro Hair Design

2100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Tel: 887-9191

10% off haircut and style; 20% off color highlights or perm

600 Restaurant at the Watergate

600 New Hampshire Ave., NW

Tel: 337-5890 • Fax: 337-5895

10% discount after 8:00 p.m.

(does not apply to bar service or alcohol)

Sizzling Express Columbia Plaza

538 23rd St., NW

Tel: 659-1234 • Fax: 659-2800

10% off hot foods, salads, sandwiches and fountain sodas
(does not apply to sushi)

Thai Coast Restaurant

2514 L St., NW

Tel: 333-2460 • Fax: 333-2462

10% discount on food in restaurant (does not apply to alcohol)

Watch & Band Clinic

2000 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Tel: 785-4552 • Fax: 785-4552

15% off leather watch bands

Watergate Gallery & Frame Design

2552 Virginia Ave., NW

(Watergate Mall)

Tel: 338-4488 • Fax: 338-4451

10% off custom framing

Watergate Photo & Copy

2560 Virginia Ave., NW

Tel: 333-7700 • Fax: 333-3083

10% discount

Watergate Valet

2546 Virginia Ave., NW

(Watergate Mall)

Tel: 337-7570

10% discount on dry cleaning and laundry

Watergate Wine and Beverage

2544 Virginia Ave., NW

(Watergate Mall)

Tel: 333-0636 • Fax: 965-2416

Wine: 10% off per case • Liquor or Water: 5% off per case

Williams The Tailor

825 21st St., NW

Tel: 822-8000

10% off general alteration and repair

The Wine Specialist

2115 M St., NW

Tel: 833-0707 • Fax: 833-9507

10% off on all non-sale items (includes single bottle / cases
of wine, liquor, beer, water, soda, etc.); not valid with
other sales and promotions

SAVE THE DATES!

2006 FBA General Membership Meetings:

February 27

May 22

March 27

June 26 –
Annual meeting

April 24

Speakers TBA

All meetings at Melrose Hotel, 2430
Pennsylvania Ave. NW, at 7:30 pm.